



Funding Note

Using Institute of Museum and Library Services Grants to Support Out-of-School Time Programs

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Overview

Involvement in arts and enrichment programs both during and after school can have a significant impact on students' academic achievement and engagement in school activities. For example, one study found that "*students involved in out of school time arts programs excelled in academics and were much more likely to have participated in school activities such as student government, math and science fairs, and writing competitions.*"¹

Out-of-school time programs² give many youth the chance to engage in interesting and enriching opportunities in the arts. One source of funding for art and cultural activities in out-of-school time programs is The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). This federal agency is charged with creating strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas.³ To support its mission, IMLS offers a host of funding opportunities that can help out-of-school time programs offer an array of arts and cultural programming drawing on the resources of museums and libraries.

Grantmaking activities to local and state libraries, as well as museums of all types, support programs implemented by individual organizations both alone and in partnership with community organizations, schools, and out-of-school time programs. Grants include federal grants to museums, federal grants to libraries, state grants to libraries and federal prizes to arts institutions and libraries to recognize quality contributions to local communities. Typically, grants range in size from \$5,000 to \$150,000 per year for up to three years. Examples of recent awards include:

¹ Americans for the Arts Monograph, *Living the Arts through Language+ Learning: a report on community-based youth organizations* Shirley Brice Heath, Stanford University and Carnegie Foundation For the Advancement of Teaching, November 1998.

² In this brief we use the term "out-of-school time program" to be inclusive of before and after school, summer, and other extended learning programs.

³ <http://www.ims.gov/> (home page) retrieved, February 6, 2009.

- A 21st Century Museum Professionals Grant to the Exploratorium in San Francisco to develop principles for curriculum development for out-of-school time programs;
- The Huntington Museum of Art in West Virginia to provide arts instruction in eight out-of-school time programs;
- Torres Martinez Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians to conduct a spring vacation science camp in its community library.

This funding note describes current opportunities that can be used to support out-of-school time programs and offers strategies and considerations for accessing IMLS funds.

To understand and explore the role libraries and museums can play in out-of-school time programs, IMLS convened a group of experts in museum and library administration and youth program development and funding to provide

guidance to the agency. Based on research and input from the organization's Youth Action Committee, IMLS published a guide for practitioners entitled *Museums and Libraries Engaging America's Youth: Youth Practitioner's Guide*. The guide provides background information on best practices for engaging youth in museum and library activities illustrated by case studies from a wide selection of sites across the country. The guide also offers descriptions of successful programs and funding sources available to support out-of-school time programs.⁴

Federal Grants for Museums

The Institute of Museum and Library Services offers a host of discretionary grants that may be used to support out-of-school time programs. While the possible award amounts vary, the majority of grants are made for either two or three years, and all require a match or cost-sharing from grantees. IMLS considers cash contributions from the grantees, cash or in-kind

Best Practices in Museum and Library Youth Programs

In a study of IMLS grantees, the Institute identified best practices employed by museum and library programs to examine what works in youth programs, share best practices, encourage effective programming, and build bridges with policymakers. Further, the guide serves as a resource for future grantees and helps to inform IMLS grantmaking procedures. Best practices identified include:

At the Institutional Level, sustainable, high-quality programs:

- Ensure continuity of program staff;
- Conduct needs assessments and evaluations to strengthen the programs;
- Provide on-going training and support to staff;
- Incorporate new sources of funding as programs evolve;
- Embed programs within the institution's mission; and
- Commit leadership.

At the Community Level, programs are most likely to be sustained when they:

- Connect deeply with community-wide local efforts;
- Partner with community-based organizations and other cultural institutions;
- Identify and cover gaps in available programs; and
- Build awareness of the program and its impact on participants and the community.⁵

⁴ *Museums and Libraries Engaging America's Youth: Youth Practitioner's Guide*, Institute of Museum and Library Services, 2008.

⁵ Presentation to Afterschool.gov Oversight Committee: *Museums and Libraries Engaging America's Youth*, January 28, 2009.

Types of Federal Funds

- *Formula Grants:* provide states or localities with a fixed amount of funding based on an established formula that is usually tied to some measure of a state's need for funding. States regularly develop a general plan describing the broad functions and populations to be served by the grant. To access formula grant funds, interested programs should build a relationship with the state agency charged with administering the grant. Formula grants are disbursed at the state or local level based on eligibility or through a competitive selection process.
- *Discretionary Grants:* are awarded for specific projects on the basis of competitive applications. They are most often time-limited and very competitive. Depending on the provision of the program, applicants may be a state or local, public or private entity. A growing number of discretionary grant programs require or encourage collaborative efforts by a consortium of community agencies and organizations.

contributions from third parties, and the value of grantee's contribution of goods or services as match or cost-sharing contributions.

National Leadership Grants

National Leadership Grants reward innovation in museum and library practice through projects with a national reach. Library and Museum Collaboration Grants can be used to improve library and museum services in communities by: improving community education needs, increasing the ability of the institutions to serve as effective venues for learning and using technology to more efficiently serve populations. Grant awards range from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000 for up to three years.

Museums for America Grants

The largest grant program for museums, the Museums for America funding portfolio, is designed to provide funds to increase community impact and programming. Past funding categories have included: Engaging Communities, Supporting Lifelong Learning, and Serving as Centers of Community Engagement. Grant awards range from \$5,000 to \$150,000 for up to two years.

Engaging High School Students through Horticulture in Chicago

In 2005, the Chicago Botanic Garden received a Museums for America grant to launch a career-training program in horticulture and entrepreneurship in the Chicago neighborhood of North Lawndale. The Green Youth Farm program has grown to two sites and employs approximately 35 high school students from mid-May through mid-October each year. Students receive a stipend as they learn by growing fresh produce, herbs and flowers. Participants develop a marketing plan, sell products to local farmer's markets and manage U-pick days.

According to Angela Mason, manager of the program, "While weeding, watering, planting and harvesting they (students) learn about being part of a team. And they take pride in shaping the farm from the ground up.

The farm was recently honored in Mayor Daley's Landscape Awards for helping to make Chicago "green."

21st Century Museum Professionals

This grant provides professional development for museum professionals to enable them to better serve their communities. Funds support classes, workshops, and seminars to assist staff in the development and dissemination of information that improves museum outreach as well as the use of innovative technology to enhance museum presentations. Grants made during the most recent competition in 2009 ranged from \$15,000 to \$500,000 for up to three years.

Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

Grants focus on recruiting and retaining staff qualified to strengthen African American museums outreach and operations as well as on providing professional development opportunities for staff at Museums of African American History and Culture. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$150,000 for up to two years.

Native American Library Services Grants and Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Grants

Grants are designed to increase the access of Tribes and Native Hawaiians to quality library and museum services, as well as preserve Native American and Native Hawaiian cultures and traditions. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$150,000 and provide funds for up to two years.

Federal Grants for Libraries

IMLS offers a series of competitive grants that libraries may apply for. Grants support the work of state and community libraries across the country.

Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program

Allowable activities under this program are aimed at recruiting new librarians and supporting the professional development and continuing education of current library staff. However, grants

may also be used to provide support for libraries, in a location certified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as a major disaster area, to create programs to introduce high school students to potential careers in library and information science by employing them to assist with library disaster recovery.

National Leadership Grants for Libraries

The broad goal of the leadership grants is to create tools and replicable models that advance the ability of libraries to enhance learning. Grants are reviewed on the strength of the applicants' strategic impact, innovation, and collaboration. Awards range from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000, with match requirements dependent upon the award size.

Federal Prizes

The Institute also offers two national prizes that recognize quality programs and outstanding commitment to the communities the institutions serve.

Coming Up Taller Awards

Ten Coming Up Taller awards are presented annually to community arts and humanities programs that provide outstanding opportunities for youth to engage in arts education and enrichment. The Institute for Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities co-sponsor this award program. Descriptions of projects honored in 2009 can be viewed at: <http://www.pcah.gov/pdf/2009CUTAwardees2.pdf>.

National Medal for Museum and Library Service

This prize is awarded annually to institutions that exceed expected levels of community outreach and service. Recipients demonstrate a long-standing commitment to their community through innovative and impactful programs.

Connecting Out-of-School Time (OST) Programs to Regional Libraries

OregonASK, the statewide afterschool network in Oregon, has partnered with the statewide library system to identify the “100 Best Books for Afterschool.” Using State Library grant funds, this set of books has been purchased for each regional library in the state. OST educators work in partnership with regional library staff to plan activities using the books in the collection.

State Grants

IMLS also funds State Library Administrative Agencies (SLAAs) through formula grants. SLAAs are required to submit five-year plans to IMLS detailing initiatives in the following areas:

- Expanding services for learning and educational resources;
- Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;
- Providing electronic and other linkages between and among all types of libraries;
- Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
- Targeting library services to individuals of diverse backgrounds and abilities; and
- Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children in poverty.⁶

Funds may be used to support state administered programs or distributed through competitive subgrant or cooperative agreement to other libraries in the state.

Considerations for Accessing IMLS Funds

Before completing an application for a grant administered by IMLS, program leaders can begin by reviewing the recommendations for effective youth programs in *Nine to Nineteen*:

Youth in Museums in Libraries: A Practitioner's Guide. Recommendations include:

- Involve youth in program design and decision-making;
- Include work or service learning that is meaningful to participants;
- Identify and cover gaps in local youth programs;
- Partner with other community-based organizations and cultural institutions; and
- Use what's learned to improve the program and strengthen youth development efforts.⁷

Before submitting an application for federal funding, program leaders can ensure their organization is well-versed in the fiduciary requirements of managing federal grants. *For example, Beyond the Award Letter*, provides leaders with worksheets and tips to support effective fund management (see the Resources section to access this tool). Program leaders can also consider the following before applying for funding:

1. Assess the capacity of the organization to track and respond to relevant grant or proposal announcements, as well capacity to manage the grant over the life cycle of funding.
2. Assess whether efforts to win a grant proposal are worth the payoff. Federal grant proposals are complex, and take significant time to prepare. Discuss with your organization's advisory committee if your group has the staff time and resources to respond to a federal grant request for proposals.

⁶ Grants to State Library Administrative Agencies, retrieved, February 9, 2009. <http://www.ims.gov/programs/programs/shtm>.

⁷ *Nine to Nineteen: Youth in Museums in Libraries: A Practitioner's Guide*, retrieved February 9, 2010. <http://www.ims.gov/pdf/YouthGuide.pdf>

3. Ensure systems are in a place to meet reporting requirements. Federal grants require both reporting of outcome data as well as fiscal data. The rules governing the expenditure are complex. Carefully assess your organization's capacity to meet reporting requirements and follow federal guidelines regarding the expenditure of grant funds.
4. Identify other funds or in-kind resources that can be used to meet matching requirements. Secure agreements from partners for resource sharing, if applicable.
5. Build relationships and form partnerships with key champions in state and local government to access public revenue. Ensure that policymakers and other leaders are aware of the work of your organization, particularly the impact of programs on key outcomes for youth. Sustained outreach and dissemination helps to lay the groundwork for the key partnerships that are needed to successfully access federal funding.

The Out-of-School Time Technical Assistance Project

This brief is part of a series of technical assistance resources on financing and sustaining out-of-school time and community initiatives developed by The Finance Project with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. These tools and resources are intended to assist policy makers, program developers and community leaders in developing financing and sustainability strategies to support effective initiatives. To access these resources visit: <http://www.financeproject.org/index.cfm?page=25>.

About The Finance Project

Helping leaders finance and sustain initiatives that lead to better futures for children, families, and communities.

The Finance Project is an independent nonprofit research, training, consulting, and technical assistance firm for public- and private-sector leaders nationwide. It specializes in helping leaders plan and implement financing and sustainability strategies for initiatives that benefit children, families, and communities. Through a broad array of tools, products, and services, The Finance Project helps leaders make smart investment decisions, develop sound financing strategies, and build solid partnerships. To learn more, visit <http://www.financeproject.org>.

Resources:

Institute of Museum and Library Services. <http://www.imls.gov>

Coming up Taller Awards.
<http://www.pcah.gov/cut.htm>

Out-of-School Time Commentary #9: When School is Out, Museums, Parks, and Libraries are In. The Forum for Youth Investment, January 2005. <http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/node/93>

Museums and Libraries Engaging America's Youth: Final Report of a Study of IMLS Youth Programs 1998-2003. Institute of Museum and Library Services, December 2007.
<http://www.imls.gov/pdf/YouthReport.pdf>

Nine to Nineteen: Youth in Museums in Libraries: A Practitioner's Guide
<http://www.imls.gov/pdf/YouthGuide.pdf>

Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills. Institute of Museum and Library Services, July 2009. <http://www.imls.gov/pdf/21stCenturySkills.pdf>

Chicago Botanic Garden, Green Youth Farm Initiative <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/greenyouthfarm/>

Research on the impact of arts education and involvement. http://www.americansforthearts.org/public_awareness/artsed_facts/001.asp

Resources from The Finance Project:

Beyond the Award Letter, Fund Management for Leaders of Small Youth Serving Organizations, September 2009. Available at: <http://www.financeproject.org/publications/BeyondtheAwardLetter.pdf>.

Beyond the Paycheck: A Human Resources Management Guide for Leaders of Small Youth Serving Organizations, September 2009. <http://www.financeproject.org/publications/BeyondThePaycheck.pdf>.

Beyond the Checkbook: A Financial Management Guide for Leaders of Small Youth Serving Organizations, January 2009. <http://www.financeproject.org/publications/BeyondtheCheckbook.pdf>.

Federal Funding Guide: searchable database of over 400 federal funding programs. Available at: http://www.financeproject.org/fedfund_search.cfm.

Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Youth Programs, January, 2007.
http://www.financeproject.org/publications/Finding_Funding_PM.pdf.

Finding Resources to Support Mentoring Programs and Services for Youth, November 2008.
<http://www.financeproject.org/publications/FindingResources-MentoringPrograms.pdf>.

Thinking Broadly: Financing Strategies for Youth Programs, January 2007.
http://www.financeproject.org/publications/Thinkingbroadly_PM.pdf.



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